

RYAN SIMPKINS

**HON. JEFFERSON VAN DREW**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 1, 2024*

Mr. VAN DREW. Mr. Speaker, this past January, I had the honor of celebrating Ryan Simpkins and his achievement of the rank of Eagle Scout, the highest honor in the Boy Scouts of America. During his time in the Scouts, Ryan has learned valuable lessons in leadership, friendship, and service and will carry these lessons with him for the rest of his life. For Ryan's Eagle Scout project, he assembled "Little Libraries", which are a free book exchange where people can take a book or share a book. His noble goal was to encourage literacy in his home area of Hopewell South Jersey and Bridgeton South Jersey. The Scouting experience has left an indelible mark on Ryan, and he will continue his scouting experience as an adult leader in scouting later in life. Congratulations to Ryan on achieving this milestone, and I wish him all the best. God Bless Ryan and God Bless the United States of America.

**HONORING BLACK HISTORY MONTH****HON. FRANK J. MRVAN**

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 1, 2024*

Mr. MRVAN. Mr. Speaker, it is with great respect and sincere admiration that I rise today to celebrate Black History Month and its 2024 theme—African Americans and the Arts. This year's theme reflects on the important work of African American artists throughout the country who preserve history, enrich communities, and create empowerment through the visual and performing arts including literature, film, music, fashion, culinary, architecture, and more.

History has shown that the artistic contributions of African Americans have been minimized, excluded, and even denied. African American artistic movements such as the Black Renaissance, the Black Art Movement, and the introduction of the Hip-Hop music genre, to name a few, have been crucial in bringing about change, equality, and social justice to the African American community in the United States and all over the world.

Throughout the years, Northwest Indiana has been home to many successful and noteworthy art-based organizations and programs that are truly inspiring. I would like to take a moment to recognize a few of them, past and present, including Vee-Jay Records, West Side Theater Guild, Gary International Black Film Festival, Gary Theatre Ensemble, Marshall J. Gardener Center for the Arts, Glen Theatre, the Gary Public Murals and Statues Program, the Miller Beach Arts and Creative District, and the Gary Public Art Competition, among others. For their unwavering dedication to preserving and honoring African Americans and the arts, each organization, program, and its members are worthy of the very highest praise.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you and my other distinguished colleagues join me in celebrating

Black History Month and honoring the countless African Americans who have played such a critical role in enriching our culture through the arts. Let us commend each of them for their profound passion, creativity, and perseverance as they have enhanced the quality of life for all Americans.

**HONORING CALEIGH GUMBINER'S SERVICE AS DIRECTOR OF CONSTITUENT SERVICES****HON. ANGIE CRAIG**

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 1, 2024*

Ms. CRAIG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to thank and congratulate Caleigh Gumbiner for five years and more than two full sessions of Congress as a member of my district office staff.

Caleigh has been with my office from the very beginning. They started our casework operation in 2019 with virtually no resources and have elevated to the role of Director of Constituent Services. For years, Caleigh has worked tirelessly to serve the constituents of Minnesota's Second District.

They've overseen the building up and training of a constituent services team that has returned more than \$4.5 million to constituents and closed over 4,200 cases. Caleigh's been vital to training other congressional offices having worked with the CAO Coach program. They led our district office team through the pandemic and all the various programs Congress passed to serve our constituents and have worked day and night during global conflicts to ensure constituents' safety.

I'll always be grateful for Caleigh's service to my team and our constituents in their various roles over the years and wish them the best in their new role with Second Harvest Heartland—I'm confident they'll continue to serve Minnesotans with exceptional service.

**MAYOR ALDO PALOMBO****HON. JEFFERSON VAN DREW**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 1, 2024*

Mr. VAN DREW. Mr. Speaker, we come together with heavy hearts to honor the life and legacy of former Mayor Aldo Palombo, a passionate and caring man who dedicated his life to service. Mayor Palombo served as the 15th Mayor of North Wildwood from 1994 to 2005 and in his capacity as mayor, completely turned the city around. What was once a run-down city was transformed into a desirable family destination under his leadership. Mayor Palombo was a beacon of optimism and boundless energy during these trying times. His leadership breathed new life into the city of North Wildwood at the time it needed it most. He was a tireless ambassador for North Wildwood, always eager to promote the community and his efforts and commitment left an indelible mark on the city. As we bid farewell to Mayor Aldo Palombo, I extend my deepest condolences to the entire Palombo Family. His memory will live on for generations to come in the city that he cared for so deeply and helped

shape. We are forever grateful for his dedication, optimism, and enduring impact on North Wildwood. May he rest in peace.

**HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF MRS. BEULAH JACKSON****HON. PATRICK RYAN**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 1, 2024*

Mr. RYAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the life and legacy of an impactful community leader, Mrs. Beulah Jackson.

As a life-long New York resident, Mrs. Jackson spent her life leading her community of Beacon where she resided for 75 years. She worked alongside politicians and organizations to promote an inclusive and equitable community for those around her.

Her advocacy roles have included being a civic leader of the African American community and a long-time member of the NAACP. She was inspired by the Civil Rights movement recognized leaders such as Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Rev. Jesse Jackson. With such significant role models, Mrs. Jackson worked alongside contemporaries such as Mayor Clara Lou Gould, Peter Seeger, and Rev. Barbara Baker to promote critical relationships between community members and their leaders throughout Dutchess County and the larger New York State.

Mrs. Jackson's legacy has truly made a mark on her local and larger communities. Her incredible dedication to various programs created for uplifting communities, specifically in Poughkeepsie and Beacon, has always been inspiring to those around her and for years to come.

As the first African-American bookkeeper in Poughkeepsie and the first African-American Director of the Anti-Poverty Program in Beacon, Mrs. Jackson was a trailblazer who should be honored for her service. Even her work with scholarship programs at the local schools or in youth clubs, she has touched the lives of the young and the old, truly contributing to the social fabric for the county.

I am truly honored to say that the district I represent had such a strong leader to show all of us the importance of service and community engagement. Her leadership will remain admirable as I hope we all can learn from the accomplishments of this amazing woman.

**IN MEMORY OF MICHAEL JOSEPH REED****HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.**

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 1, 2024*

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in sadness and in joy to celebrate the life of a good man and a friend of long-standing, Mr. Michael Joseph Reed. Sadly, Michael transitioned from labor to reward on January 15, 2024, at the age of 69. A private service will be held on Friday, February 2, 2024, among family, friends, and loved ones. While his passing leaves in its wake many heavy hearts, upon prayerful reflection, the pain we share must melt into joy. For Michael

Reed leaves a remarkable legacy of service to humanity as a public servant, mentor, confidant, husband, and friend to many.

A native of Buffalo, New York, Michael earned his bachelor's degree in Business Administration from Oakwood College in Huntsville, Alabama. He also earned a master's degree in Urban and Regional Planning from Fisk University in Nashville, Tennessee.

Michael's career in public service began as a Presidential Management Intern at the U.S. Department of Transportation, Office of Budget Policy. This experience led him to his first Capitol Hill position as an intern for former Congressman Louis Stokes of Ohio, who was a member of the House Appropriations Committee. After leaving Congressman Stokes, he joined the staff of Congressman William Gray, Chairman of the House Budget Committee and a member of the Appropriations Committee, as Legislative Director. After leaving Congressman Gray's office, he was Vice-President for Marketing at the United Negro College Fund. He was also the Director of Regional Card Marketing and Vice-President for Government Affairs for the American Express Company.

When I was selected to serve on the House Appropriations Committee in 2003, I needed a seasoned specialist and adviser. I was blessed to have Michael Reed join my team—starting as a Policy Adviser and Special Assistant, later becoming my Deputy Chief of Staff, and finally my Chief of Staff where he served until his Capitol Hill retirement in 2021.

For 18 years I matriculated in the "Michael Reed School of Budgetary Policy". He was a master of the appropriations process and its nuances. He was also constantly growing and expanding his expertise. Initially unfamiliar with agriculture issues, he quickly became steeped in the knowledge of the field. He was an invaluable asset to me and was respected by my colleagues on both sides of the aisle.

It was no surprise that upon leaving Capitol Hill, Michael was honored by the communities and industries whose lives his work touched, most notably the University of Georgia (UGA) and the Georgia Peanut Commission. UGA's College of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences bestowed its Medallion of Honor on Michael in 2021. This award recognizes outstanding individuals for their dedication to the college's mission and is an expression of the University's gratitude for the time, advice, support and impact awardees have provided. The Georgia Peanut Commission presented Michael with its Distinguished Service Award in 2022, which is a testament to the decades of work Michael Reed did to help protect our peanut farmers and grow the peanut industry.

Upon his retirement from the public sector, Michael decided to re-enter the private sector and utilize his extraordinary skills and talents to make a meaningful contribution to mankind's efforts to confront the challenges of the environment and climate change. In 2021, he joined the American Forest Foundation as Vice President of Policy, exploring the pivotal role our nation's forests play and the potential they have in meeting this global challenge.

Sir Winston Churchill often said: "You make your living by what you get, you make your life by what you give." Michael gave so much to so many for so long and truly lived a complete

and full life. His public service, his devotion to his family, and his service to his community and nation, reflect the legacy he leaves and the joy we must celebrate. Truly the world is a better place because of the life Michael led.

Michael Reed accomplished so much in his life, but none of this would have been possible without the grace of God, the love and support of his loving wife, Attorney Diane Fields Reed, his late father-in-law, Judge Richard Fields, their beloved dog, Alexandra, and a host of family and friends that will miss him dearly.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues in the U.S. House of Representatives to join my wife, Vivian, and me, along with countless others throughout Georgia and the Nation in saluting and honoring Mr. Michael Joseph Reed for service to his community, to his country, and to humankind; and in extending our deepest condolences to Michael Reed's family, friends, loved ones, and all those who mourn his loss. We pray that we will all be consoled and comforted by an abiding faith and the Holy Spirit in the days, weeks, and months ahead.

---

JASON FETROW

### HON. JEFFERSON VAN DREW

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 1, 2024*

Mr. VAN DREW. Mr. Speaker, this past January, I had the pleasure of attending Jason Fetrow's Eagle Scout Court of Honor to celebrate his achievement of the highest honor in the scouting world. Jason started his journey with the scouts at just six years old when he joined Cub Scout Pack twelve. At age eleven, he moved up to the Boy Scouts who have allowed him incredible experiences such as the opportunity to attend the World Jamboree in 2019. For his Eagle Scout Project, Jason decided to give back to the fields where he played baseball for eleven years by expanding the trophy case at Gabriel Memorial Baseball Fields by three feet so it can better accommodate the growing number of trophies on display. Just last year, Jason graduated from Cedar Creek High School and he now studies Exercise Science at Stockton University. It was my honor to celebrate this milestone with Jason and wish him all the best in his future. God Bless Jason and God Bless the United States of America.

---

### INTRODUCTION OF RESOLUTION TO CONDEMN THE ETHNIC VIOLENCE IN THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

### HON. ANDRÉ CARSON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 1, 2024*

Mr. CARSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce my resolution condemning the ethnic violence in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). Dr. King famously said, "injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere". The United States, credible human

rights organizations, and civil society have documented and published reports and findings that implicate the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo in aiding and collaborating with armed groups and militias, including several that are designated for United Nations sanctions due to human rights violations.

Militias engage in illicit mining activities to finance and sustain themselves, often exploiting child labor and engaging in environmental degradation practices that undermine the DRC's economic interests and international treaty obligations.

My resolution condemns all acts of violence perpetrated against ethnic minorities by members of the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and armed groups operating throughout the Democratic Republic of the Congo. It reaffirms that the United States has held and continues to hold the Government of the DRC responsible for upholding the rights of all citizens, regardless of ethnicity, in accordance with the DRC's international obligations.

My timely resolution also holds accountable all state security forces that perpetrate atrocities against the civilian population by conducting transparent investigations and prosecutions and taking all additional necessary measures to prevent further atrocities continue progress toward the disarmament, demobilization, reintegration, reparation, and resettlement of armed groups in coordination with the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo, as outlined in United Nations Security Council Resolution 2666 (2022). Last, it calls on the President Joe Biden to appoint a Special Envoy to the Great Lakes region of Africa, which will be vital to addressing the enduring regional security crisis emanating from eastern DRC.

Mr. Speaker, I hope my colleagues will join me in condemning the ethnic violence in the DRC.

---

### CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK

### HON. JEFFERSON VAN DREW

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 1, 2024*

Mr. VAN DREW. Mr. Speaker, as we celebrate Catholic Schools Week across the Nation, we come together to recognize and honor the profound impact of Catholic education. On January 31st, we marked National Appreciation Day for Catholic Schools, a day that acknowledges the enduring commitment of these institutions to educate not only the mind but also the soul. Catholic Schools, like St. Ann's in Wilmington, Delaware where my grandchildren attend, instill faith, academic excellence, and service in their students. Together, we are not just celebrating a week; we are celebrating the noble mission of Catholic education, to educate the whole child and transcend the boundaries of traditional learning. God bless our Catholic Schools and God Bless the United States of America.